

Amendments to the Claims

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) A method for muting zero level pulse code modulated (PCM) samples received as inputs to a digital to analog converter (DAC) including a PCM input module and a mapping module, the method comprising:

monitoring a level of the PCM samples received as inputs to the PCM input module;

sensing consecutive zero level PCM samples from among the monitored input PCM samples; and

muting a PCM input to the mapper when only a single parameter has been sensed, the single parameter being a predetermined number of consecutive zero level PCM samples ~~have been sensed~~.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising un-muting the PCM input to the mapper when a first non-zero level PCM sample is has been sensed.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the muting and un-muting is configured for autonomous activation.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the predetermined number is programmable.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 4, wherein the non-zero level PCM sample ~~immediate~~ immediately follows the consecutive zero level PCM samples.

6. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for muting zero level pulse code modulated (PCM) samples received as inputs to a digital to analog converter (DAC) including a PCM input module and a mapping module, the apparatus comprising:

means for monitoring a level of the PCM samples received as inputs to the PCM input module;

means for sensing consecutive zero level PCM samples from among the monitored input PCM samples; and

means for muting a PCM input to the mapper when only a single parameter has been sensed, the single parameter being a predetermined number of consecutive zero level PCM samples ~~have been sensed~~.

7. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~1~~ 6, further comprising means for un-muting the PCM input to the mapper when a first non-zero level PCM sample has been sensed.

8. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~2~~ 7, wherein the muting and un-muting is automatic.

9. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1 ~~6~~, wherein the predetermined number is programmable.

10. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the non-zero level PCM sample ~~immediate~~ immediately follows the consecutive zero level PCM samples.

11. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the zero level PCM sample is the set of all values that fall below a predetermined level programmed by a system user.

12. (New) The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the zero level PCM sample is the set of all values that fall below a predetermined level programmed by a system user.